

SAN JOAQUIN RIVER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

June 14, 2002
Stanislaus County Agricultural Center
Modesto, California

Welcome and Introductions

There was a request for Paula Landis and Tim Ramirez to give a brief history of SJRMP. During their account the group was reminded of the 1995 San Joaquin River Management Plan. The group discussed reprinting the report because some members of the committee believed that it took too much time to access the report from the web. It was also suggested to make the report available on CD.

San Joaquin River Management Coalition

John Fawcett, discussed the San Joaquin River Management Coalition (RMC). The group represents stakeholders from Fresno, Madera, and Merced Counties. Fawcett described the RMC as an advocacy group. They would like to make their own plan for San Joaquin River restoration.

He passed out a draft of the operating practices of the RMC. The purpose of the group is "to be the clearly defined organization in which landowners, NGO's and local, state and federal agencies with diverse interests, mandates and fiscal responsibilities in the San Joaquin River collaboratively and proactively address resource management challenges and communicate more effectively across jurisdictional boundaries." The mission is "to proactively address resource management challenges on the San Joaquin River in a way that improves the economic, social and environmental viability of the valley."

The group has asked different legislative bodies to request that the Corps San Joaquin Comprehensive study be put on hold until the Friant/National Resources Defense Council San Joaquin River Restoration Plan settlement has gone through public review and is approved by the SJRMC and other stakeholders. Representatives that support this motion are George Radanovich, 19th District member of congress, Madera County Board of Supervisors, Madera County Farm Bureau, and San Joaquin River Water Authority.

Action Team Report

Ernie Taylor reported on the Action Team meeting held on May 13 in Modesto. Jason Phillips, Bureau of Reclamation, discussed the Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation and Kevin Elcock, DWR, and Fraser Gensler, USACE gave an update on the Comprehensive study, and Taylor updated the group on the SJRMP coordinator position. The group was not given

a summary on the Storage Investigation and the Comp study because the same issues were being discussed in the current meeting. The coordinator position was discussed by Taylor and Landis to remind the group that even though the coordinator is an intra-agency position the selected individual will not represent the Bureau or DWR but work as an independent representative.

CALFED's ERP, Ecosystem Restoration Program Update

Campbell Ingram, DWR, gave an EREP update. The federal operations bill is out of the committee and both bills are on the floor. The funding will be \$1.6 billion over the next 3 years. On the restoration side, there are about 60 projects that have been approved and contracts are in place for implementation. The projects that were approved are available on the internet, http://calfed.water.ca.gov/ecosystem_rest.html, and total around \$60 million.

Upper San Joaquin river Basin Investigation

Jason Phillips, Bureau of Reclamation, gave a briefing on the Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation (USJRBSI). The project is sponsored by CALFED. Jason covered CALFED's purpose in the investigation, problems, solutions, and the planning approach. The area designated for restoration is the reach from Friant Dam to the Merced River confluence with the SJR. The CALFED goals for the USJRBSI are to contribute to restoration of the San Joaquin River (SJR), improve SJR water quality for environmental and urban use, and limit regional problems like groundwater overdraft and flood damage. Some measures considered to achieve these goals are to improve water quality through better coordination of flows, re-operate existing storage facilities, enlarge existing storage facilities, and construct new on-stream and off-stream storage. The main alternative discussed was the Friant Dam enlargement and a new surface storage facility at Temperance Flat. The maximum investigation analyzed several levels of enlargement alternative investigated increased the height of the Friant Dam, the largest was raising the Dam 144 feet, increasing the storage capacity of the reservoir an additional 700,000 acre-feet. Millerton Lake existing capacity was reported to be around 500,000 acre-feet. The beneficial uses for the additional storage were discussed and included hydropower, increased flood control, water supply, and groundwater recharge. Phillips mentioned that he is coordinating with DWR's Integrated Storage Investigations and Corps/DWR Comp Study. There are a series of workshops planned to form a stakeholder group and the first workshop was held on May 29 in Fresno the next workshop will be July 31 in Modesto. Most of the Stakeholders have been notified of the current investigation. This study is phase 1 of the investigation that will include a report of the analysis, planning approach, several alternatives, cost, benefit, and water supply. Phase 2 will be a detailed feasibility study if approved by Congress and supported by local interests. Project web site: www.mp.usbr.gov/sccao/storage.

Comprehensive Study

Fraser Gensler, USACE, gave an update of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Comp. Study. They have been concentrating on four issues (1) policy/issues – dealing with concerns from stakeholders to look at issues that are primarily non-federal there are people looking at issues. (2) outreach – actively meeting with different stakeholder groups. (3) CALFED – make process the same analysis for assessment, like the pier review process and stakeholder review. (4) flood warning and emergency response. The document will be ready for review in early July. The final report is expected in September to accompany the Water Resource Development Act (2004).

NRDC/FWUA Partnership

Jared Huffman, NRDC discussed the NRDC/Friant Water Users Authority partnership. The goal of the partnership is to restore natural ecological processes to the San Joaquin River below Friant Dam and to avoid adverse effects. There are two studies being planned a restoration study and water supply study. The plans will be integrated into the comprehensive plan after NEPA and CEQA compliance. The San Joaquin River that is included in the plans is from Friant Dam to the Merced River confluence. Some issues that are going to be discussed are better utilization of surplus flows, recapture/recirculation, and conservation. Potential pilot projects that were discussed are releases from Friant Dam, water purchase, groundwater banking, and physical restoration projects.

Other Business

The letters provided by the RMC were discussed in detail because the letters did not say what John Faweett, Jason Baldwin and Ron Pistoiresi were stating the letters intended to do. It was explained that the umbrella document of the comp. study will continue and only the upper San Joaquin is on hold.

Norman Crow mentioned that the CALFED proposal for monitoring on Oristimba Creek was for salinity and flow stations and to determine the proper sites. Ernie Taylor and Paula Landis would like the group to work with DWR and the existing operations currently on Oristimba Creek.

Date of next meeting: Friday, September 20 in Sacramento

**ATTENDEES AT
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
June 14, 2002**

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20	Ernie Taylor	DWR, 3374 E. Shields Ave. Fresno, CA 93726	(559) 230-3352	etaylor@water.ca.gov
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Conference Call Participants:				
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